

Economic Commission for Europe

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context

Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment

Bureau

Geneva, 25–26 February 2020

Annotated provisional agenda for the meeting

**To be held in salle IV, Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m.
on Tuesday, 25 February 2020 (and closing at 12.30 p.m. on
Wednesday, 26 February)***

1. Organizational matters.
2. Status of ratification of the Convention, its amendments and its Protocol.
3. Preparations for the ninth meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment
4. Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties
 - (a) Practical arrangements;
 - (b) Draft agenda;
 - (c) Draft workplan 2021–2023;
 - (d) Draft declaration;
 - (f) Chairs of the sessions;
 - (g) Officers for the next intersessional period;
 - (h) Provisional schedule of meetings 2021–2023.
5. Budget and financial arrangements.

* There are accreditation procedures for all delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations. Members of the Bureau are therefore requested **to register online by 7 February 2020** through the following link: <https://uncdb.unece.org/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=6Tt8X0>. The use of Internet Explorer browser is recommended. In case of difficulty, please refer to the user manual (<https://www2.unece.org/wiki/display/OMR/Online+Meeting+Registration+Guidelines>) or contact the secretariat by e-mail (elizabeth.james@un.org) and (eia.conv@un.org) or by telephone at +41 22 917 6307. On their way to the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva's Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix (see map and other practical information available from the UNECE website at <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>).

6. Implementation of the workplan 2017–2020.
 - (a) Compliance with and implementation of the Convention and the Protocol.
 - (b) Promoting ratification and application of the Protocol and the Convention.
 - (c) Subregional cooperation and capacity-building.
7. Inputs to related international processes.
8. Other business.
9. Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. Organizational matters

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 25 February, 10–10.30 a.m.

Relevant documentation: (The present) annotated agenda (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.1)

1. This provisional annotated agenda was prepared by the secretariat in agreement with the Chair. The Bureau will be invited to adopt its agenda as set out in the present document.

2. Status of ratification of the Convention, its amendments and its Protocol

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 25 February, 10.30–11. a.m.

Relevant documentation: Status of ratification (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.2)

2. The secretariat will inform the Bureau on the status of ratification of the Convention, its amendments and the Protocol. The Bureau members from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Ukraine are expected to report on their countries' progress regarding ratifications of the amendments to the Convention and, as relevant, of the Protocol.

3. The Bureau will be invited to note the information. It may also propose actions that could be taken to encourage accession to or ratification of the Convention, its amendments and the Protocol.

3. Preparations for the ninth meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 25 February, 11 a.m.–12 p.m.

Relevant documentation:

Preliminary version of the annotated provisional agenda of the ninth meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.3).

4. The Bureau is expected to review and agree on the annotated provisional agenda of the ninth meeting of the Working Group to be held in Geneva, from 9 to 11 June 2020.

4. Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 25 February, 12–1 p.m. and 3–5 p.m.

Relevant documentation:

Preparations for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.4)

Provisional agenda for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.5)

Draft decision on the workplan 2021–2023 (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.6)

Draft declaration (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.7)

Nominations and possible criteria for officers to be elected (2021–2023) (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.8)

Tentative schedule of meetings 2021–2023 (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.9)

A. Practical arrangements

5. The secretariat will provide an update on practical preparations for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, to be held in Vilnius, on 8–11 December 2020.

B. Draft agenda

6. The Bureau is expected to consider and agree on an annotated provisional agenda for the sessions of the Meetings of the Parties to be forwarded to the Working Group at its next meeting.

7. As requested by the Working Group at its eighth meeting (Geneva, 26–28 November 2019), the Bureau is invited to further deliberate on the following possible topics for panel discussions to be held during the general segment of sessions: smart and sustainable cities; sustainable infrastructure; energy transition; or circular economy. The Bureau is expected to narrow the topics down to two key priority topics for the Working Group to decide on at its next meeting, taking into account the comments made during and after the last meeting of the Working Group. The Bureau is also expected to make proposals for the organization of panel discussions/a special event during the high-level segment that would mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention. The Bureau is invited to consider possible speakers and facilitators for both panels/events, and its members to volunteer to lead their organization.

C. Draft workplan 2021–2023

8. The Bureau is invited to review and agree on draft decision VIII/3-IV/3 on the adoption of the workplan for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocol for the period 2021–2023, and on the proposed elements of the draft workplan in annex to that draft decision, considering the comments made at the last meeting of the Working Group. It is expected to ensure that for each sub-activity of the workplan information is provided on

the organizational arrangements, expected outcome, time schedule as well as identified resources and lead countries or organizations. It is also invited to discuss the proposal of the European Union that the Meetings of the Parties adopt a new workplan containing only those activities for which funding was confirmed, without including, in an additional annex, waitlisted activities requested by delegations for which the funding was yet to be identified.

D. Draft declaration

9. The Bureau is invited to review, and as needed update, the draft declaration it previously prepared with the support of the secretariat, including in the light of possible comments from the Working Group. (By the deadline of 10 January 2020, no delegation had responded to the call of the Working Group for the submission of comments on the draft through the secretariat).

E. Chairs of the sessions

10. The Bureau is expected to discuss the chairing of the general and high-level segments of the sessions, noting that the high-level segments had usually been chaired by a host country representative and the general segments by the Chair or a Vice-Chair of the Bureau.

F. Officers for the next intersessional period

11. The Bureau is invited to discuss and to put forward proposals on officials for the treaty bodies to be elected at the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties for the next intersessional period, that is, the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Working Group, the Chair and members of the Bureau and five members of the Implementation Committee. Additional new members of the Implementation Committee may need to be nominated depending on whether Committee members are Parties to the Protocol.

12. The Bureau is also expected to propose possible criteria for officers to be elected, for consideration of the Working Group at its next meeting.

G. Tentative schedule of meetings in the next intersessional period

13. The Bureau is invited to further consider its earlier proposal for a provisional schedule of meetings of the treaty bodies in the next intersessional period that is expected to extend from January 2021 to December 2023.

5. Budget, financial arrangements and financial assistance

Tentative timing: Tuesday, 25 February, 5–6 p.m.

Relevant documentation:

Recent contributions to the Convention's and the Protocol's trust fund (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.10)

Draft decision on budget and financial arrangements for 2021–2023 (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.11)

14. The secretariat will provide an update on any recent contributions to the Convention's and Protocol's trust fund. It will also report on any additional pledges further to the request for further funding that the ECE Executive Secretary addressed to all Parties' foreign ministers and environment ministers in December 2019.

15. Considering the comments from the Working Group's last meeting, the Bureau is expected to review, and as needed revise, its earlier proposals for draft decision VIII/4-IV/4 on budget and financial arrangements for the Convention and the Protocol in the period 2021-2023. The Bureau proposals should address the general shortage of contributions to the trust fund under the treaties and the budgetary hole in the second half of 2020, which put at risk the functioning of the treaties.

16. The Bureau is also invited to review and agree on a proposed budget for the next intersessional period, to be forwarded for consideration of the Working Group at its next meeting, as an annex to draft decision VIII/4-IV/4.

6. Implementation of the workplan 2017–2020

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 26 February, 9.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m.

Relevant documentation:

Workplan implementation status (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.12)

Draft decision VIII/1 on reporting and review of implementation of the Convention (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.13)

Draft decision IV/1 on reporting and review of implementation of the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.14)

Draft strategy and an action plan for the future implementation of Convention and the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.15)

Draft decision VIII/7-IV/6 on the strategy and the action plan for the future implementation of Convention and the Protocol (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.16)

Draft decision on the applicability of the Convention to the life-time extension of nuclear power plants (VIII/5) (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.17)

Draft guidance assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.18)

Draft decision IV/5 on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment (ECE/MP.EIA/B/2020/INF.19)

A. Compliance with and implementation of the Convention and the Protocol

Draft long-term strategy and an action plan for the future implementation of the Convention and the Protocol

17. The Bureau is expected to consider and agree on a draft long-term strategy and an action plan for the future implementation of the Convention and the Protocol to be prepared by the Netherlands and Poland, with support from the secretariat, based on informal discussions to be held in Warsaw, on 23 and 24 January 2020.

18. The Bureau is also invited to review and agree on draft decision VIII/7-IV/6 on the long-term strategy and the action plan for consideration of the Working Group at its next meeting.

Review of compliance and implementation

19. The Chair of the Implementation Committee is expected to present the main outcomes of the Committee's forty-sixth session (Geneva, 10–13 December 2019) and the main objectives of its forty-seventh session (Geneva, 16–19 March 2020), including regarding the preparatory work for the next sessions of the Meetings of the Parties. The Bureau is expected to take note of the information.

20. The Bureau is invited to consider and agree on draft decisions VIII/1 and IV/1 on the review of implementation of the Convention and the Protocol to be submitted to the Working Group at its next meeting.

Draft guidance on the applicability of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants

21. The Bureau is invited to review and agree on draft decision VIII/5 for the adoption of the draft guidance on the applicability of the Convention to the lifetime extension of nuclear power plants that is being prepared by the ad hoc working group co-chaired by Germany and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for submission to the Working Group at its next meeting, and ultimately to the Meetings of the Parties at their next sessions.

Legislative assistance

22. The secretariat and, as relevant, the Bureau members representing the concerned countries will be invited to provide any updates since the last meeting of the Working Group as regards legislative assistance to support legal reforms of countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and the countries' efforts to implement and to ratify the Convention and/or the Protocol.

B. Promoting ratification and application of the Protocol and the Convention

Draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment

23. The Bureau is expected to review and comment on the draft guidance on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment, as revised by consultants based on comments from the Working Group and input from a task force composed of representatives of Austria, Finland, Ireland, Slovenia and Italy and supported by the secretariat and the representatives of the European Investment Bank and WHO.

24. The Bureau is also invited to review and agree on draft decision IV/5 on assessing health impacts in strategic environmental assessment for consideration of the Working Group at its next meeting.

Other activities

25. The secretariat will provide any other updates since the meeting of the Working Group on activities foreseen in or related to the workplan as regards promoting ratification and application of the Protocol and the Convention, including:

(a) Finalization of the two-page informal pamphlets or "FasTips" on the Convention and the Protocol;

(b) Activities funded by the EU4Environment Programme, in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic Moldova, and Ukraine;

(c) Activities in Central Asian countries funded by Germany and implemented in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

26. The Bureau is expected to provide its views on the information provided and, as needed, agree on actions to ensure the implementation of the activities.

C. Subregional cooperation and capacity-building

27. The secretariat and the concerned Bureau members will be invited to report on the plans for the implementation of activities foreseen in or related to the workplan regarding subregional cooperation and capacity-building in the following subregions:

(a) Baltic Sea subregion, involving a meeting to be organized by Denmark, Finland and Sweden in Copenhagen, on 25-26 March 2020;

(b) Eastern Europe and the Caucasus: a sub-regional conference foreseen in Autumn 2020, with funding from EU4Environment;

(c) Central Asia; a subregional conference foreseen in the second half of 2020 to be organized in cooperation with OSCE and with funding from ECE and Germany.

28. The Bureau is expected to take note of the information and, as needed, to provide advice.

7. Inputs to related international processes

Wednesday, 26 February, 2.30–3 p.m.

29. The secretariat will report on the workshop on environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments in areas beyond national jurisdiction (Brussels, 28-29 January 2020) organized by the European Commission (DG for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries) to support the ongoing negotiations in the United Nations on the new high seas agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction – BBNJ).

8. Other business

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 26 February, 3–3.30 p.m.

30. Members of the Bureau wishing to raise other business should contact the secretariat as soon as possible.

9. Presentation of the main decisions taken and closing of the meeting

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 26 February, 3.30–5.30 p.m.

31. The Bureau is expected to agree on the main decisions taken at the meeting and to confirm the date and location of its next session before the Chair formally closes the session.